

Imagine

#2

\$1.50
U.K. 95p



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27 April 1978
Oakland, CA

When one has begun to settle into a regular routine, as we have to an extent here, one has to be conscious of not creating a rut, of continuing to push forward into new areas.

Our movement into color stories is one such push. It's been invigorating so far, especially in attempting to as quickly as possible correct our early mistakes. We hope this issue is giving you a better idea of what's possible than what we've shown you before.

Editorially we are trying to push forward as well, especially with IMAGINE. The intention from the beginning is to be a bit more experimental with this title than our naturally conservative tendencies would normally dictate. Already in this specific issue you can see some positive results.

We lead with a fictional riff off the public "persona" of musician "Joni Rostarr". Interestingly, one sees that creators Lee Marrs and Mike Vosburg reveal as much about themselves as they do "Joni Rostarr" and "Black Crow". It's been an engaging experience watching these two rather independent artists (Lee, in fact, is primarily known in our publications for drawing her own stories) push and pull with each other to turn out this story. There's a natural "clashing" going on that yields surprisingly good results.

Similarly "cartoonist" Trina and "illustrator" Steve Leialoha have blended their normally opposing styles into a unique combination one doesn't see often. Gene Day's "Days of Future Past" exhibits an innovative "double-track" narrative (Oh, and by the way, Harlan, Gene swears he's never read your "On The Scenic Route" when I called him on it after reading his "Speed" herein printed. While I like Gene's "version" of the same idea, I have to admit I feel you did it better. Okay?) Mike Gilbert gives us an entertaining meld of genres in his "Encounter" piece.

Lastly, cover artist and color section creator Craig Russell brings us into worlds only he knows. This guy positively knocks me out with the way he brings an incredible literacy to his visualizations. I'm not a big fan of textless stories, as generally they're an excuse to avoid substance in favor of "flash", but I'm wholeheartedly behind this one. Craig's talent is also prominently displayed in his full-color adaptation (with scripter Pat Mason) of Wagner's PARSIFAL, which will be released by the time you read this. Craig's "Avatar/Chimera" will conclude next issue.

We hope you enjoy these experiments. As always, your letters are appreciated and answered. See you next time.

Mike Friedrich

IMAGINE #2 (June, 1978) is published quarterly by Star Reach Productions, P.O. Box 385, Hayward, CA 94543. Mike Friedrich, editor and publisher. ©copyright 1978 Star Reach Productions. Cover art and "The Avatar and the Chimera" ©1978 P. Craig Russell. "Encounter" ©1978 Michael T. Gilbert. "Days of Future Past" and "Speed" ©1978 Gene Day. "Drug Fiends of the Martian Moon" ©1978 Trina Robbins. "Black Crow" ©1978 Lee Marrs and Mike Vosburg (song lyrics: "Big Yellow Taxi", "Both Sides Now", "Woodstock" ©1969 Siquomb Publ. Co., "I Had a King" ©1969 Joni Mitchell, "My Old Man", "California" ©1971 Joni Mitchell/BMI, "Let the Wind Carry Me", "For The Roses" ©1972 Joni Mitchell/BMI, "Jericho" ©1974 & 1977 Crazy Crow Music/BMI, "Black Crow" ©1976 Crazy Crow Music/BMI)

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FIRST PRINTING: June, 1978

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ANY SIMILARITY TO REAL PERSONS, LIVING OR DEAD, EXCEPT FOR PURPOSES OF SATIRE, IS COINCIDENTAL.

PEYOTE ST. JEAN, **SKYWALKER**, DECLARED FULL SORCERESS BY HER MENTOR, **DON PESCALITO**, AFTER RIGOROUS APPRENTICESHIP; DANGEROUS CHALLENGE AND CONSIDERABLE FOLDEROL, HAS KEPT COMPANY WITH HER FORMER INSTRUCTOR AND HIS BOON COMPANION, **DON DEGENERATO**, HE OF THE WISE WAYS AND PUNGENT THOUGHT. HER EXPOSURE TO THEIR **DEEP INSIGHTS** AND **COMPLEX ZEN WAVES** HAS INSPIRED ONE OVERWHELMINGLY POWERFUL STATE OF MIND.



ALL I GLEAN FROM YOU TWO IS **POWER, DESTRUCTION, HORROR, MACHIAVELLIAN CONVOLUTIONS!** HOW ABOUT LIGHTENING UP A LITTLE, HUH? A BIT OF LOVE? **ROMANCE?** IS THERE NO ROOM FOR WARMTH IN OUR MAGIC?

YOUR...UH...**PATIENCE** IS REWARDED, MY DEAR. A LITTLE ROMANCE COMING UP IN THE FORM OF.....



Black Crow

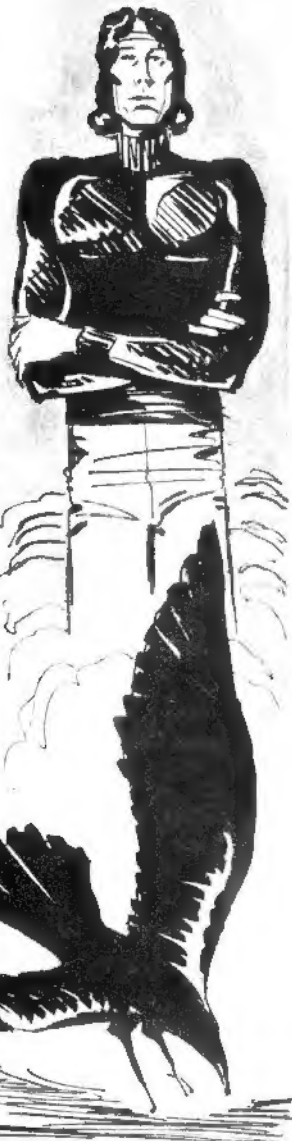
WELL, WELL. WHO ARE **YOU**, YOU GREAT BIG HUNK?

AHEM. A TOUCH OF RESPECT, PEYOTE.

ARTHUR BLACK CROW IS A **SHAMAN**, MEDICINE MAN OF NOTE IN HIS CURRENT INCARNATION.

HOWEVER, HIS PAST LIVES HAVE EXCELLED IN **CREATIVE POWER**: A DEAF MUSICIAN, RENAISSANCE INVENTOR/PAINTER, MEDIEVAL QUEEN OF FRANCE, AND SO ON—ALL **EXCEPTIONAL FOCI OF GENIUS**.

AHH, BUT CURRENTLY I AM AN **EXHAUSTED ...LOVER**.



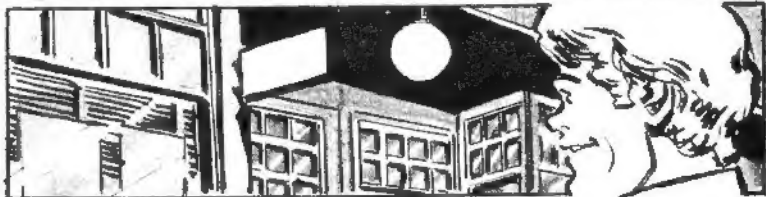




MY POWER DEVELOPED: I EXPLORED THE EDGES OF THE OCCULT
—DISCOVERING MY HANDIEST FORM OF BEING: **THE CROW.**



YET AS I TRIED TO LOSE MYSELF IN MY CRAFT, I COULD NOT SHAKE **JONI'S RECURRING IMAGE.** HE FORCE, THE PULL, OF HER
UNIQUE SELF—HOWEVER BRIEFLY GLIMPSED—**HAUNTED** MY HOURS.



I **TRANSFORMED** MYSELF INTO AN APPROPRIATE
PERSONA—SIMILAR AGE GROUP AND TASTE—AND CAME
TO THE TORONTO CAFE WHERE SHE HAD BEGUN TO PERFORM.



I HEAR
SHE WRITES
ALL THESE
SONGS
HERSELF.

WHO CARES?
LET'S HEAR
"BLOWIN'
IN THE
WIND,"
SISTER!

SHE WAS THIRSTY FOR A
STORYBOOK ROMANCE
—ON THE BRINK OF LIFE.



MY LADY, YOUR
MUSIC IS MUSIC
TO MY EARS....
ALSO MY EYES,
NOSE AND
THROAT.



YOU ARE ALL
I ENVISAGED—SO
CLOSE TO MY DREAM
OF LOVE, MY CAVALIER
OF THE RADISHES.



WHY
NOT TRY THE
CHORD SHIFT
HERE?

NO, NO,
NO! IT'S
SUPPOSED
TO SOAR
WHEN...



IN THE SECURITY OF OUR
LOVE, **HER TALENT**
BLOSSOMED, AND
THE PROMISE OF HER
SUCCESS BRIGHTENED.

WHAT A
VOICE!

IT'S
ALMOST
EERIE...

EVEN IN OUR APEX OF DEVOTION, THE MUSIC WAS STILL HER **FIRST LOVE**.

UH...NOT NOW, DICK, THIS PROGRESSION IS GIVING ME FITS.



SHE WAS GROWING QUICKLY. NEW YORK WAS THE BIG TIME AND WE KNEW HER PATH LED THERE. I WAS BEING A MANAGER... SORT OF



FROM THE FIRST DAY, I FELT NEW YORK WOULD BE THE END OF THE ROAD...



"LIVING FOR THAT ROCK N' ROLL DANCING SCENE PAPA SAYS 'LEAVE THE GIRL ALONE, MOTHER SHE'S LOOKING LIKE A MOVIE QUEEN.' MAMA THINKS SHE SPOILT ME PAPA KNOWS SOMEHOW HE SET ME FREE."



THE CAFE CROWD FELL IN LOVE.



HER LIFE, HER CRAFT **EXPLODED**. SO MUCH TO DO, SEE. BUT SHE WASN'T SWAMPED, SEEMED TO CHOOSE THE VALUABLE OVER VOLUME.

"I GUESS I SEEM UNGRATEFUL WITH MY TEETH SUNK IN THE HAND THAT BRINGS ME THINGS I REALLY CAN'T GIVE UP JUST YET"



PERHAPS I HAD DRAWN MY DICK PERSONA TOO TIGHTLY. LIKE MERCURY, SHE WAS **SLIPPING AWAY**.



"BUT WHEN HE'S GONE ME AND THEM LONESOME BLUES COLLIDE...THE BED'S TOO BIG, THE FRYING PAN'S TOO WIDE."



SO I HAD TASTED HER. PLUMBED HER DEPTHS. A PLEASANT INTERLUDE I RETURNED TO MY OCCULT SKILLS.



BUT SHE RETURNED TO MY THOUGHTS AGAIN AND AGAIN. LIKE A CONTINENT ONLY TOUCHED, I KNEW THERE WAS **MORE**. I COULD NOT STAY AWAY....

JONI WAS TRAVELING TO CALIFORNIA FOR A VISIT...



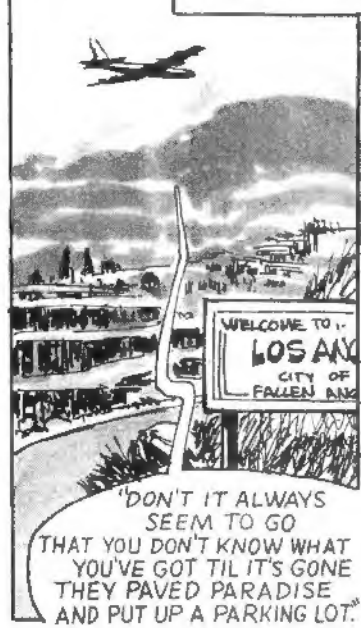
...AND SO WAS I: POLITICAL ACTIVIST, MARCH ORGANIZER, PROTESTER AGAINST THE DEATH, THE WASTE OF THOSE DAYS.



WILLY GREEN HERE. CAN I BUY YOU A DRINK?

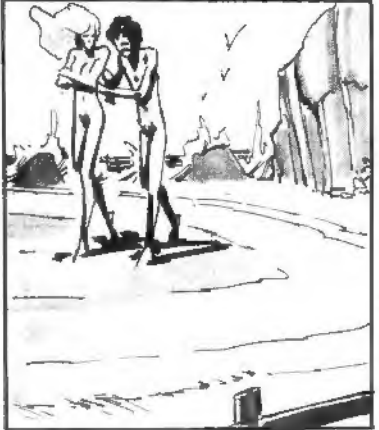
WITH EYES LIKE YOURS? NO LET ME BUY YOU ONE.

...AS WAS JONI-- IN HER SONGS.



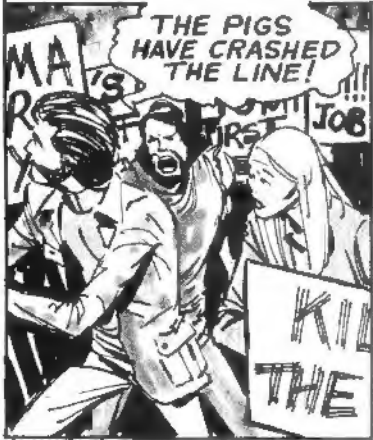
"DON'T IT ALWAYS SEEM TO GO THAT YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'VE GOT TIL IT'S GONE THEY PAVED PARADISE AND PUT UP A PARKING LOT."

WE SPARKED HEADS IMMEDIATELY--RATTLED THROUGH THE FAILURES OF OUR SOCIETY, THE HOPES OF OUR GENERATION, DEBATING THE METHODS AND AIMS OF SOCIAL CHANGE.



JONI, DISCOVERING BIG SUR WITH YOU HAS BEEN A REAL JOY.

WILLY, I THINK I'VE FOUND MY BASE. THE BEAUTY, EXCITEMENT, THE NURTURING FLOW.



THE PIGS HAVE CRASHED THE LINE!

THE JUICE OF OUR LOVE WAS THE MISSION, NOT EACH OTHER, SO AS EVENTS RICOCHETED US FURTHER AWAY...WE DRIFTED INTO FRIENDSHIP

THIS TIME. THERE WAS NO SORROW IN OUR GOODBYES.



WHENEVER YOU'RE IN L.A....

I CAN PARK MY SLEEPING BAG BEHIND YOUR COUCH?

SHIT NO! THAT'S WHEP! I STASH MY SLEEPING BAG BEHIND MY BOARD. I PROMISE TO FIND SOMEWHERE TO PARK...YOU. TAKE CARE.

I WAS HOOKED....**THE SENSE OF HER**, OF HUMAN CREATIVITY, I'D GOTTEN AS WILLY WAS ENTIRELY DIFFERENT THAN THAT AS DICK. WHAT OTHER FACETS WERE THERE?



"I CAN'T GO BACK THERE ANYMORE
YOU KNOW MY KEYS WON'T FIT THE DOOR
YOU KNOW MY THOUGHTS DON'T
FIT THE MAN
THEY NEVER CAN- THEY NEVER CAN."

MS. ROXTARR, I'M **DARWIN CROSS**, PRODUCER FOR FLOWER CHILE RECORDS. JOAN SENT ME. I'VE HEARD YOU AT THE STARRY PLOUGH AND THE TROUBADOR— YOU'RE INCREDIBLY GOOD! WHAT YOU **NEED** IS...AN EXCELLENTLY PRODUCED ALBUM.

SOUND'S DELIGHTFUL TO ME! MEET MY TUNEFUL COMPANIONS HERE....



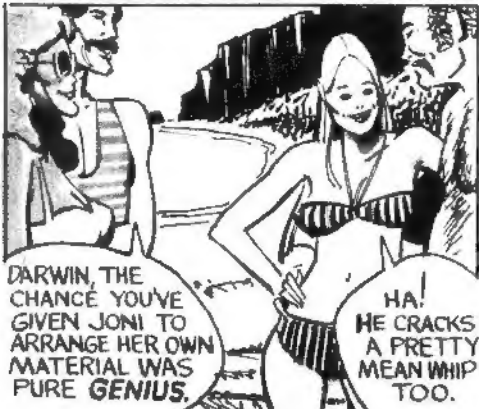
FOUR MONTHS LATER...

"I'VE LOOKED AT LIFE FROM BOTH SIDES NOW FROM WIN AND LOSE AND STILL SOMEHOW IT'S LIFE'S ILLUSIONS I RECALL I REALLY DON'T KNOW LIFE AT ALL."



JONI WENT...**OVER THE TOP.**

JONI NOW LIVED A RICH TAPESTRY, A COLORFUL FLOW OF **OLD AND NEW INFLUENCES**. NONE OF THE LONGLASTING PALS AND EX-LOVERS RECOGNIZED ME, THOUGH. I WAS AS **GOOD AT MY CRAFT** AS SHE WAS AT HERS.



DARWIN, THE CHANCE YOU'VE GIVEN JONI TO ARRANGE HER OWN MATERIAL WAS PURE **GENIUS**.

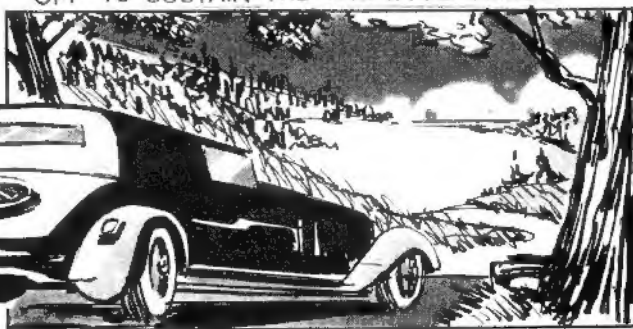
HA! HE CRACKS A PRETTY MEAN WHIP TOO.



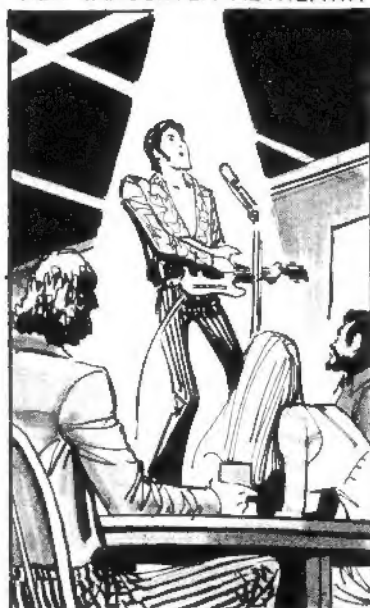
"AND I DREAMED I SAW THE BOMBERS RIDING SHOTGUN IN THE SKY AND THEY WERE TURNING INTO BUTTERFLIES ABOVE THE NATION WE ARE STARDUST WE ARE GOLDEN AND WE'VE GOT TO GET OURSELVES BACK TO THE GARDEN."

TIMING HAD CHANGED. BEFORE I HAD KNOWN WHEN TO GO...BUT NOW, JONI INITIATED OUR PARTING. THE ROAD BECKONED.

ALTHOUGH HER SUPERSTAR STATUS WAS ESTABLISHED, SHE SENSED THE **NEED FOR BALANCE**—ESCAPE FROM THE TINSEL SUCCESS. OFF TO SUSTAIN THE CREATIVE JUICES.



SO I NEXT APPEARED AS A NOBODY MUSICIAN NEAR HER VANCOUVER RETREAT...



SAY, KID—
I LIKE YOUR
...TONE...

PERHAPS, AS THE PURSUED INSTEAD OF THE HUNTER, I COULD **CAPTURE** THE HEART OF THIS INDEPENDENT WOMAN.

WE BOTH DISCOVERED HER SKILL AS A **TEACHER**...



WAIT, LOOK: YOU DON'T NEED TO HAM IT UP THERE—JUST **FOCUS** ON THE **CONTENT** AND THE FEELING WILL FOLLOW.

SHE BROUGHT ME INTO THE CIRCLE, EVERWIDENING, OVERLAPPING TANGENTS OF HER CONNECTIONS.



SEEING NOT JUST JONI, BUT OUR FRIENDS, AS THEY DEALT WITH LIFE'S PUZZLES, I CAME TO REALIZE MORE CLEARLY THE HUMAN CONDITION. MY OTHER INCARNATIONS HAD NEVER BROUGHT ME SO CLOSE TO NORMAL HUMAN LIFE...



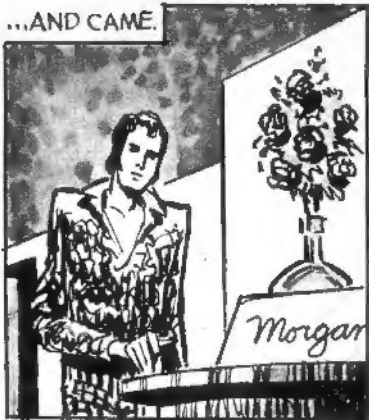
AUTO WRECK OFF ROUTE 66—KILLED MARIA AND LITTLE TONY...

CLOSE TO THE PERIMETER OF THOSE NOT FREED BY SORCERY...THE TRIUMPHS OF THOSE WHOSE ONLY RESOURCES ARE THEIR OWN MINDS AND HEARTS. / 7

IN THIS PERSONA, IT WAS MY **TALENT** THAT INTRIGUED JONI...AS MY "CAREER" BLOOMED, I KNEW FAREWELL LOOMED...



...AND CAME.



THE INTIMACIES WITH JONI HAD ONLY MADE ME WANT HER MORE! AS MINE. I WOULD FIND THE PERSONA TO CAPTIVATE HER ALWAYS! I WOULD.

GREETINGS, MS. ROXTARR. I'M **LARS RAVENAL**. FROM FUNK FINANCIALS, INC. I BELIEVE YOU REQUESTED FIDUCIARY AID.



PERHAPS, WITH AN OLDER MAN, SHE WOULD SETTLE IN. HER THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE COULD FORM A BOND....

HMM, WELL I CERTAINLY APPRECIATE YOUR...AID, SIR.

GLAD TO BE ABLE TO **EXPLORE** YOUR INVESTMENT DEPTHS SO THOROUGHLY, MS. ROXTARR.



THE GREAT AZTECS...HA! THEY WORSHIPPED DEATH -THESE LONGGONE "CIVILIZED SOULS?"



...YES, FED DEATH, SOUGHT IT, EMBRACED ITS COMING GLADLY....



SEVERAL MONTHS LATER

CALIFORNIA I'M COMING HOME -I'M GOING TO SEE THE FOLKS I DIG I'LL EVEN KISS A SUNSET PIG-CALIFORNIA I'M COMING HOME!

SHE DIDN'T NEED A FATHER.



SMOTHERED!

FUCK IT!!

CAGES OF PLACES!

I COULDN'T GO ON. I WANTED THE BOND, **THE COMMITMENT**.
 ALLE SE SFF BEFN FRUITFUL BUT TRANSITORY. I COULDN'T
 PLAY **ROLES** ANY LONGER—I CAME BACK...

AS MYSELF.



OF COURSE I DIDN'T MENTION THE PAST ONLY MY PRESENT SELF...

HMM YOU **DO** HAVE WITCHERY ABOUT YOU YUM! SAY, DO YOU MAGIC FOR A LIVING?

WELL, YES -UH.. NO. AHH... I'M ON MY **OWN** TIME NOW ...A LITTLE TO THE LEFT

I FIT RIGHT INTO HER CURRENT LIFE. **I SHOULD:** WE HAD **SHARED** SO MUCH OVER THE YEARS, **WE WERE ATTUNED.**

BLECH! YOU MAY HAVE A TOUCH OF MAGIC ART BUT YOUR TOUCH OF GARDEN IS **HEAVY!!**

HEY I LOVE IT THAT WAY

ACCEPTANCE OF EACH OTHER AND THE CIRCLES WE SPUN

"I'VE BEEN TRAVELLING SO LONG HOWM I EVER GOING TO KNOW MY HOME WHEN I SEE IT AGAIN I'M LIKE A BLACK CROW FLYING IN A BLUE BLUE SKY"

THIS TIME THERE WAS THE FULL RANGE I SOUGHT- FRUITION ON ALL LEVELS.



TAKE **THAT**, YOU PANTHER INJUN!!

AFTER A YEAR I BEGAN TO FEEL HER MOVING AWAY, AS THOUGH A CHEMISTRY CHANGE TRANSPIRED. I THOUGHT HAD WON HER. SHE **ACCEPTED** ME AS MYSELF. I KNEW HER IN ALL HER FACETS BUT IT WAS **NOT ENOUGH...**

I DECIDED THAT THE PRICE WAS NOT TOO HIGH. I MUST OPEN UP... **TOTALLY.**



THE GREEK ISLES HAVE A BLINDINGLY WHITE SUN... THE PAINTS WILL TAKE UP A WHOLE TRUNK, BUT IT'LL BE WORTH IT ONCE I GET THERE. SORRY YOU WON'T COME. MAYBE WE CAN MEET IN MALLORCA IN SEPTEMBER.

SHE WAS MOVING ON..



JONI, LET'S TALK

I TOLD HER OF MY PERSONAS—HER FIRST HUSBAND, THE ROCK PRODUCER, ALL OF IT



TWO HOURS LATER

ART, IT ALL SEEMS. TRUE! I BELIEVE IT! OTHERWISE, YOU COULDN'T KNOW THAT...

OKAY YOU WERE DICK, WILLY DARWIN, MORGAN AND LARS.

BUT YOU WEREN'T BEN, DIEGO, ELAINE, YAKIMO, LENNY, NANCY...

UH... NO

THIS IS ALL SO FINE! HOW WONDERFUL THAT...

WAIT! JONI, DON'T YOU SEE WE COULD BE ONE SPIRIT, ONE SOUL—FOREVER. WE ARE DESTINED FOR EACH OTHER!



I THOUGHT I COULD FIND THE PERSONA YOU WOULD CLEAVE TO ALWAYS! AND YOU SEEMED TO LOVE ME AS MYSELF BEST, SO...

HEY, YOU HAVE BUILT YOUR OWN HOLY GRAIL. DON'T YOU SEE THE FULL TAPESTRY? ALL THOSE YEARS OF BEING CLOSE TO ME? DON'T YOU SEE?

I CAN NEVER LOVE ANYONE IN ONE WAY FOREVER. I'M CLOSE TO SOME FOR ONLY AWHILE. OTHERS REMAIN FRIENDS. COME AND GO. IN SEARCH OF LOVE AND MUSIC, MY WHOLE LIFE HAS BEEN ILLUMINATION, CORRUPTION. DIVING, DIVING TO PICK UP ANY SHINY THING.



I'VE TAKEN YOU IN ALL YOUR WAYS AND YOU IN MINE! WHAT A GLORIOUS THING! THE CIRCLES, CYCLES OF SELVES INTERSECTING AND EVER NEW, TASTED DEEP AND FRESH.

YOU AND I ARE BOTH OF THIS NECKLACE-PATTERN LIFE TOUCHING AND CHANGING. I AM WOMAN OF HEART AND MIND—YOU A CROW FLYING, FLYING! WHY NOT?

I DON'T KNOW...NOT SURE





"I'LL TRY AND KEEP MYSELF OPEN TO YOU
THAT'S A PROMISE I MADE TO LOVE
WHEN IT WAS NEW
ANYONE WILL TELL YOU JUST HOW HARD IT IS
TO MAKE AND KEEP A FRIEND
SWEET DARLING, IT'S A RICH EXCHANGE
IT SEEMS TO ME
IT'S A WARM ARRANGEMENT."

I
DON'T
KNOW

I'M
NOT
SURE.

NOW I HAVE **THREE**
CHOICES: BOW OUT
ENTIRELY; REMAIN MYSELF
AND BE HER **FRIEND**, TOUCHING
HER LIFE AS OUR PATHS CROSS;
OR TO TASTE HER AGAIN AS
NEW PERSONAS!..NO! I COULDN'T
GO BACK TO THE ROLES, HAVING
KNOWN HER AS **MYSELF**. CAN'T
DECIDE..IT'S ON **HER TERMS**, DAMMIT!

BULLSHIT,
HANDSOME! YOU
HELPED SET THE
PATTERN **YOURSELF!**
WHATCHA COMPLAINING? THE
TWO OF YOU HAVE SHARED
MORE THAN TRISTAN AND
ISOLDE, ROMEO AND JULIET,
DASHIELL AND LILLIAN!!!
WHAT DRAMA!
WHAT ROMANCE!

AHEM . THEN TOO, SPEAKING
SHAMAN-WISE, YOU HAVE
EXPERIENCED **DIRECTLY**
WHAT WE SORCERERS
USUALLY ONLY OBSERVE—
THE DEPTH, PAIN, JOY
OF EVERYDAY HUMANS.
IN YOUR VARIOUS CLOAKS
YOU'VE **PARTICIPATED**
IN THIS WOMAN'S LIFE...
NVALUABLE LEARNING,
MY DEAR GENIUS.

HM, ART.. NICE
BICEPS YOU GOT
THERE...

NOT TO MENTION
GETTING A LOTTA
CHOICE TAIL,
HE H, HEH.



POOF!

STORY-LEE MARRS ART-Mike Vosburg

LETTERS -MARY GORDON



YOU KNOW, I
SUPPOSE THERE'S NO
REAL **HURRY** ON MY
DECISION..

YOUR
CACTUS
OR MINE?

RUINED A
GOOD KAYWOODY
THERE..

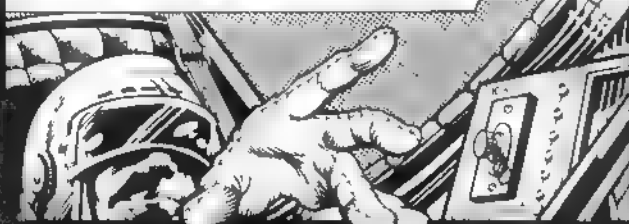
THIS REMINDS ME OF THE TIME
I MATERIALIZED AS A
ZAMBESI COFFEE BEAN
VENDOR IN GUADITINKI...

THE
END

REPLACED MY ARM IN '97
MY LEGS IN '99....



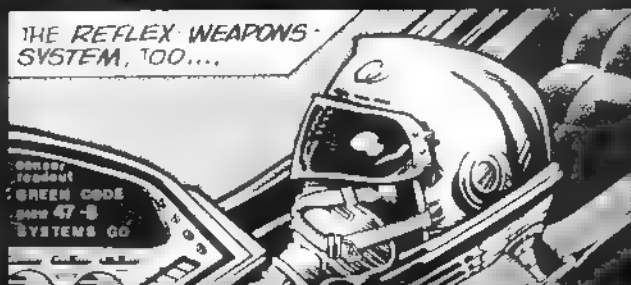
ONCE SEATED WITHIN THE MACHINE, I HOOK UP TO
THE COMPUTER... AND HIT IGNITION...



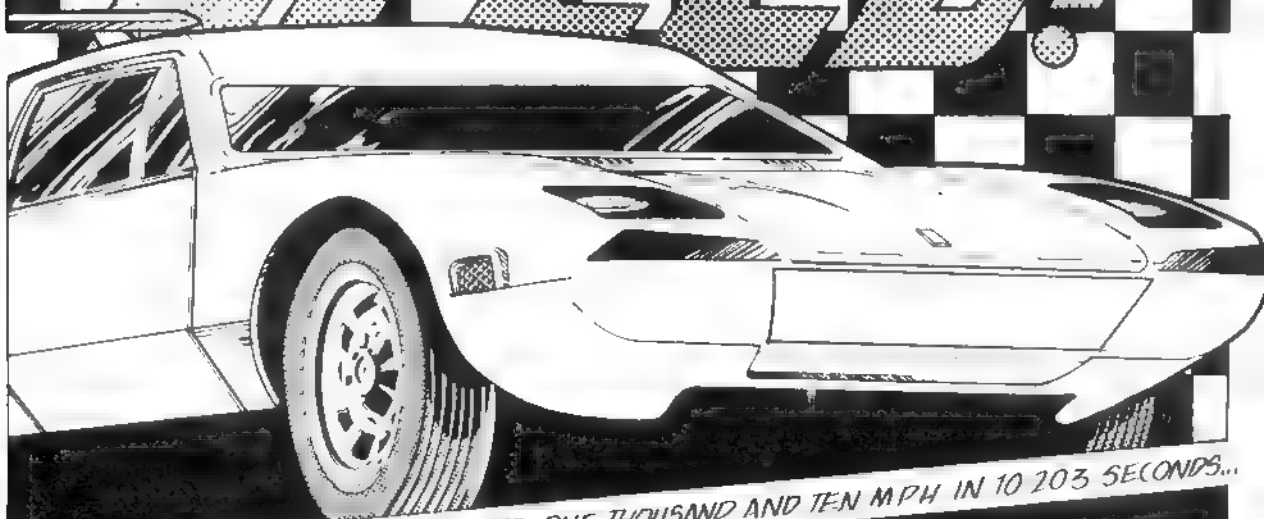
SURE THE COMPUTER
COST A BUNDLE



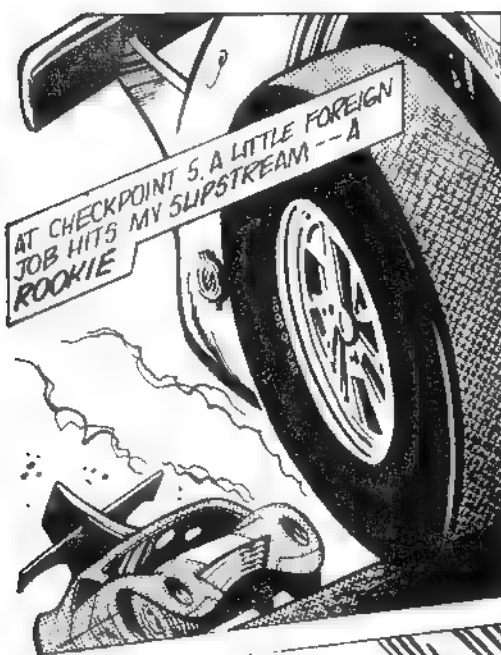
THE REFLEX WEAPONS
SYSTEM, TOO....



SPEED!



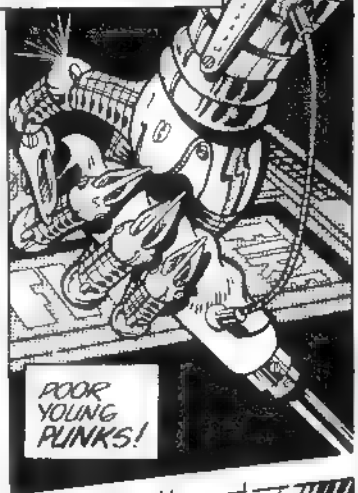
BUT HELL, IT WAS WORTH IT. ZERO TO ONE THOUSAND AND TEN MPH IN 10.203 SECONDS...



THESE KIDS NEVER LAST LONG ON THE CIRCUIT...



I HIT THE R.W.S.



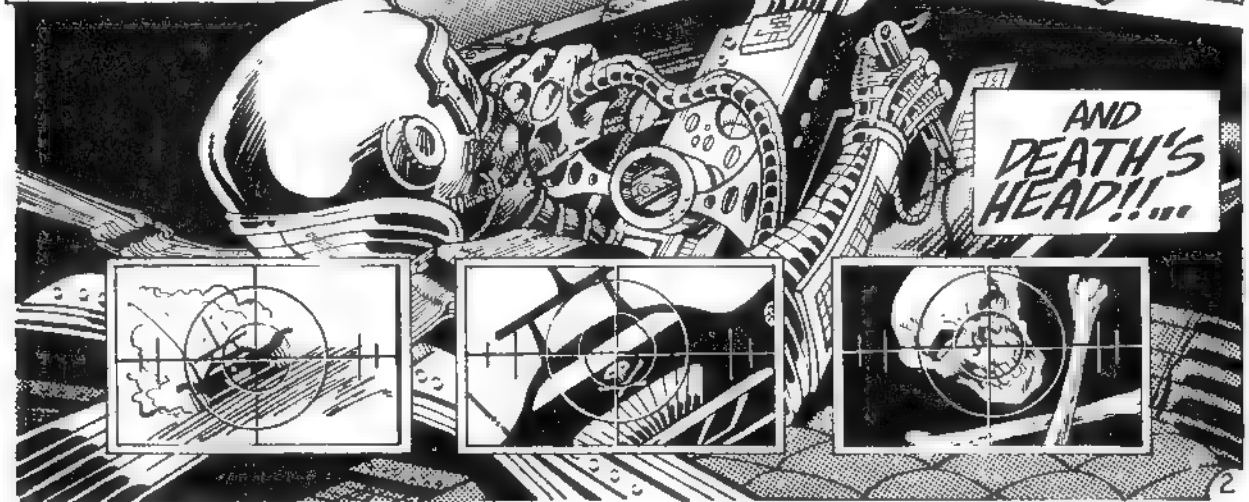
POOR YOUNG PLUNKS!

THEY KNOW NOTHING WHEN THEY HIT THE CIRCUIT-- AND THEY SELDOM GET A CHANCE TO LEARN...



RULE ONE NEVER SOCKEY INTO A SLIPSTREAM... DO IT... AND YOU DIE!

AAHH, I WAS BORN FOR THIS GAME... IT'S MY BALL PARK ALL THE WAY... MINE...



AND DEATH'S HEAD!!...

FOR 20 YEARS, DEATH'S HEAD AND I
HAVE FOUGHT IT OUT ON THE CIRCUIT
...A HATE SO TANGIBLE WE CAN TASTE
IT...

HIT DEATH'S HEAD IS NO ONE'S
FOOL HE ACCELERATES-- A
TANKERHOUSE FOR ON MY
TANK...



I TRIGGER ALL
EXTERIOR WEAPONS AS
SOON AS I SPOT
HIM...

ONLY SPEED WILL
SAVE ME NOW... THAT'S WHAT
IT'S ALL ABOUT... SPEED
AND DEATH.



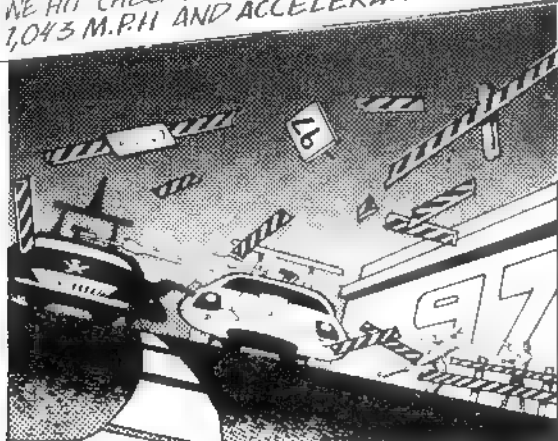
...A VERY DANGEROUS
ERROR...

WHO CAN DRIVE THE FASTEST
MOVE THE QUICKEST
SPEED...

--I LOVE
IT!!!

WE HIT CHECKPOINT 97 LITERALLY AT
1,043 M.P.H. AND ACCELERATING...

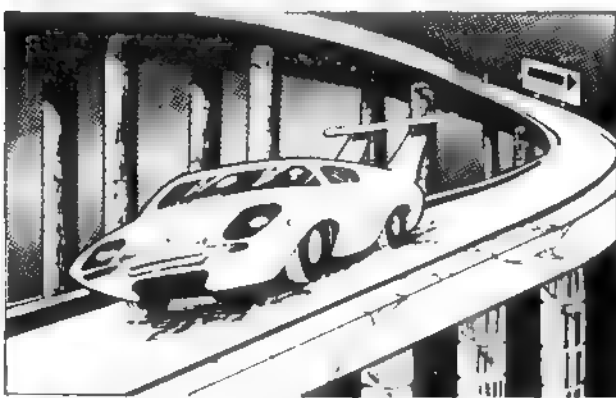
AND FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 20 YEARS
DEATH'S HEAD MAKES A WRONG
MOVE... HE SLIPS IN ALONG
THE RAILING...



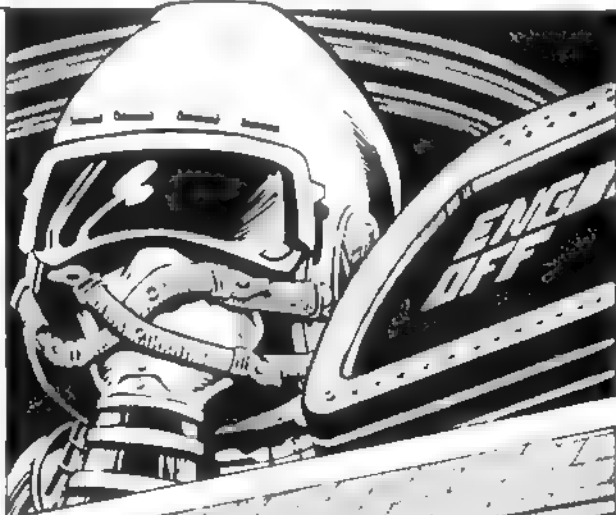
...AND I HAVE HIM!!!!



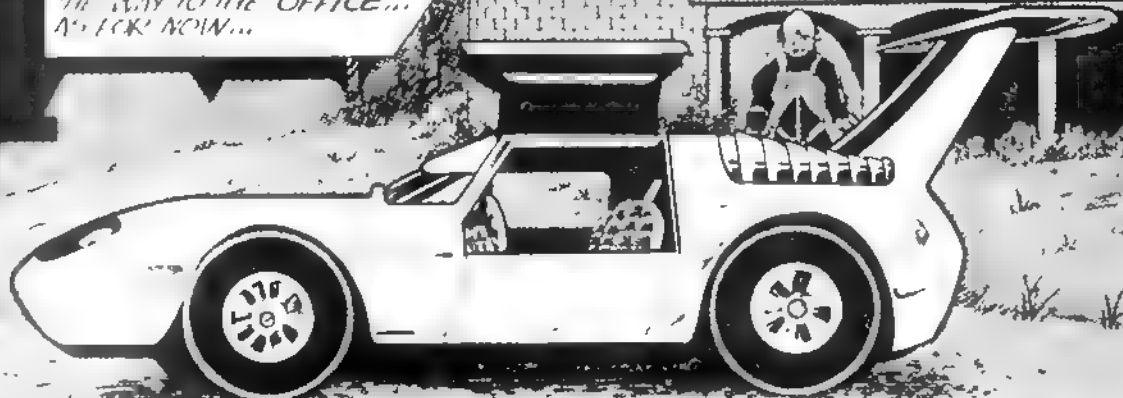
IT'S OVER AFTER 20+ ONE YEARS OF CAT AND MOUSE I'M LONE KING OF THE CIRCUIT...



UNTIL SOME ONE SHOT AT HIS HIS WAY FROM THE BOTTOM AND I MAKE A MISTAKE SURE IT'S GOING TO HAPPEN...SOME DAY...



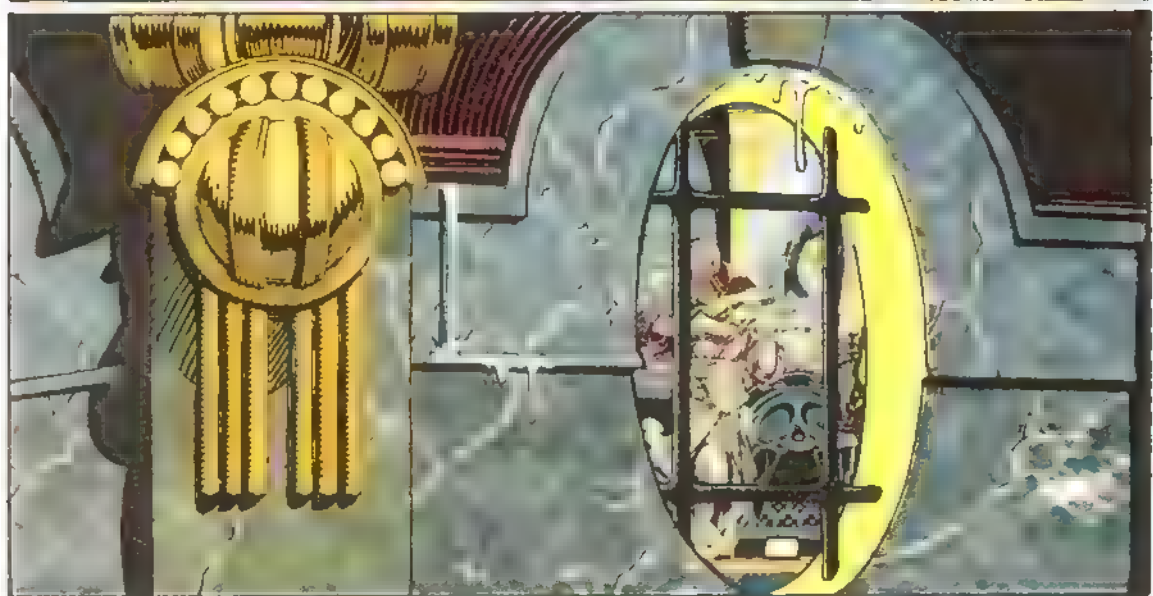
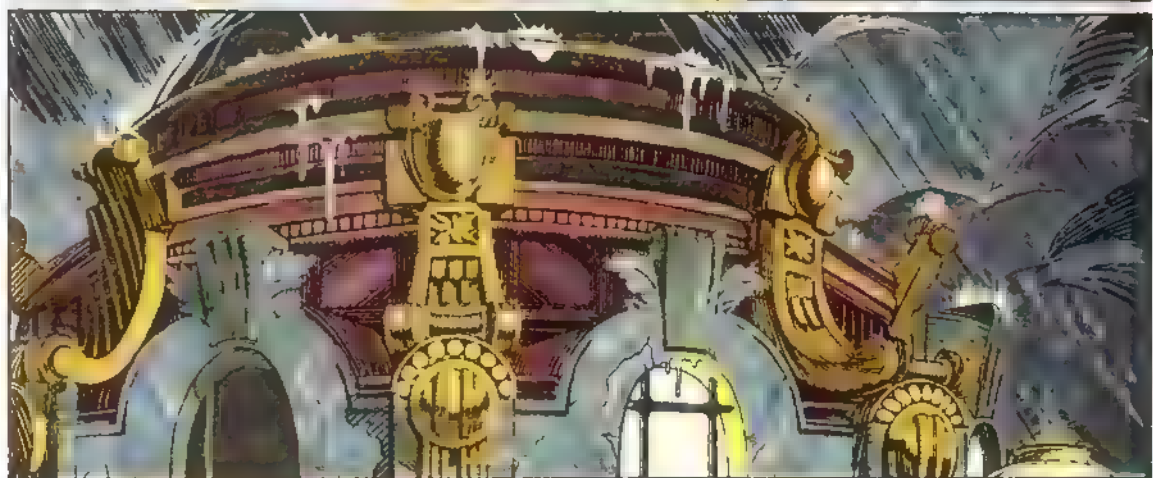
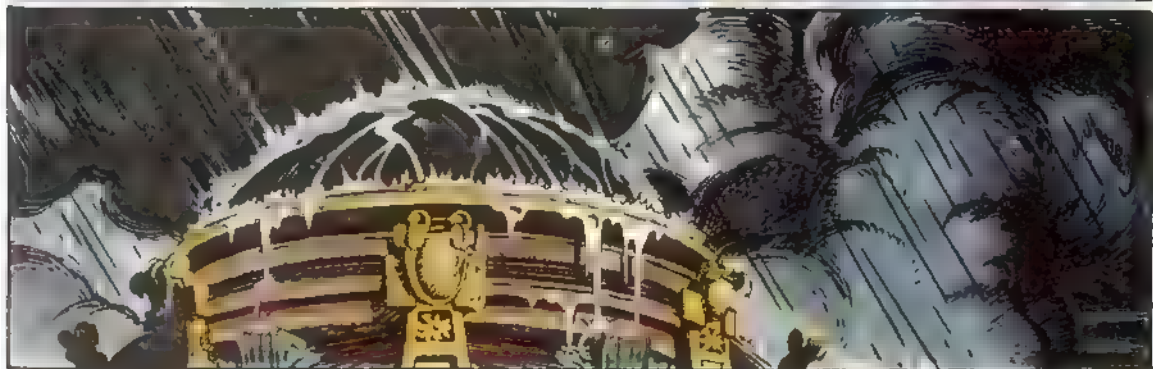
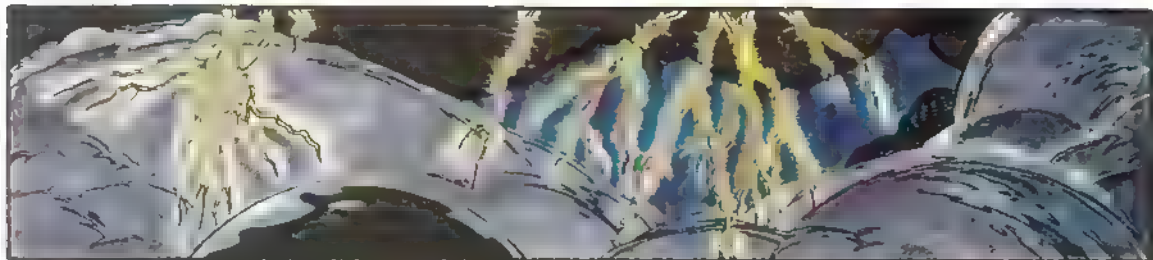
I AM A LITTLE BIT WORRY ABOUT THAT TOMORROW ON THE WAY TO THE OFFICE... A LITTLE NOW...

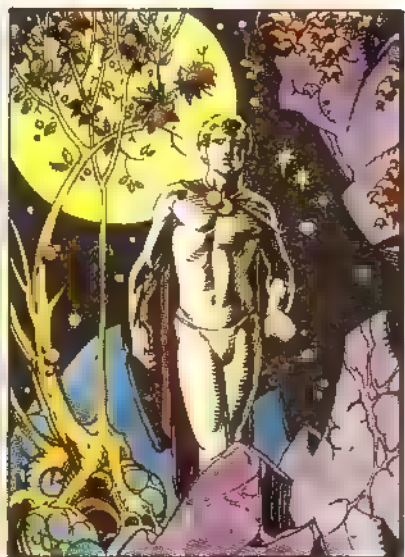
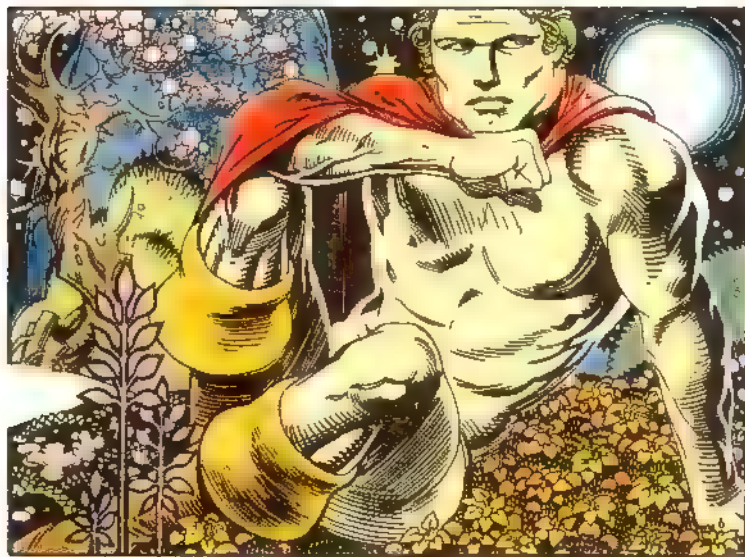
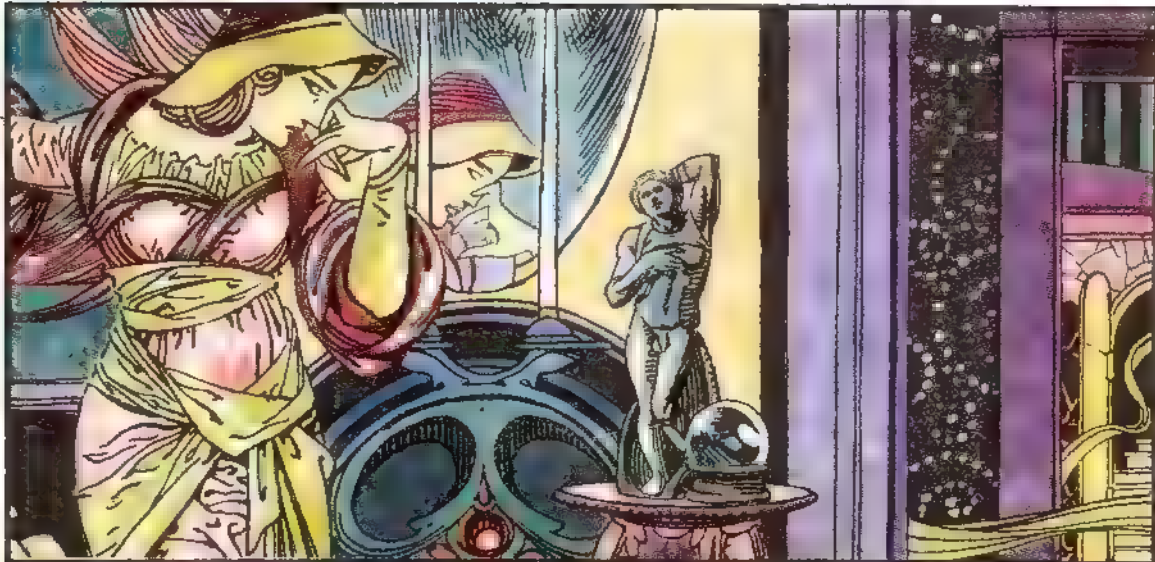


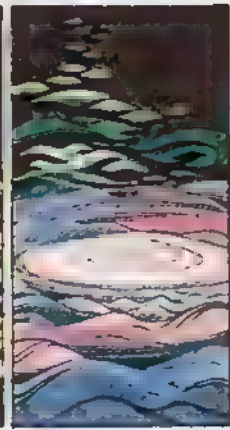
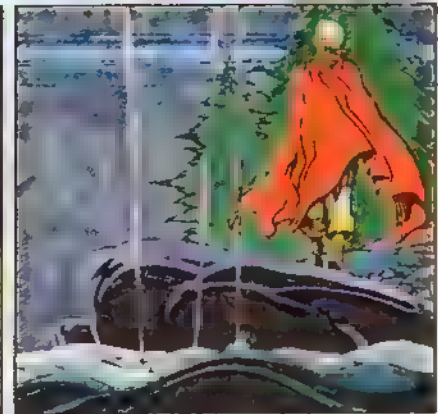
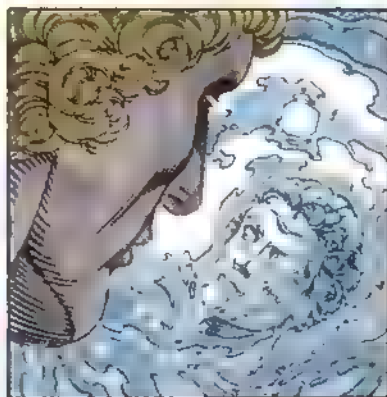
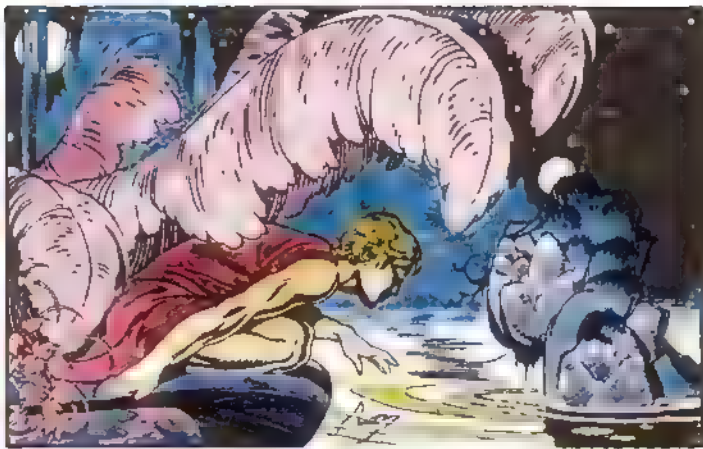
...CAN ALMOST TASTE THE POT ROAST Y'READY..

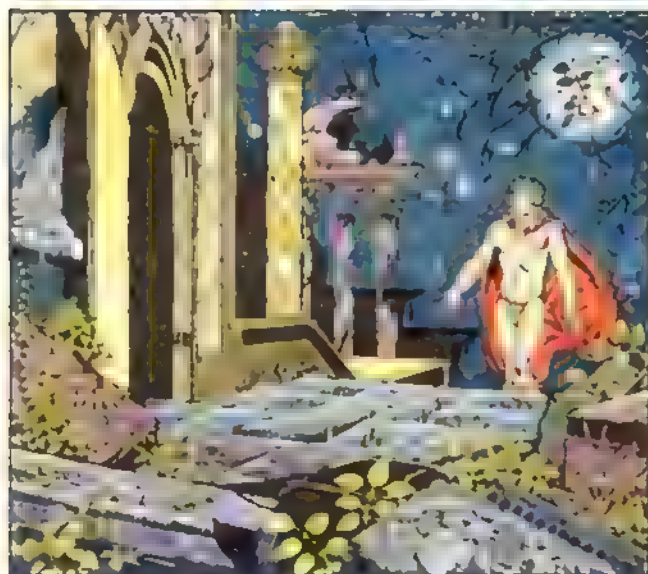
LPN

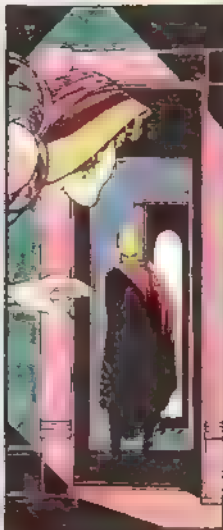
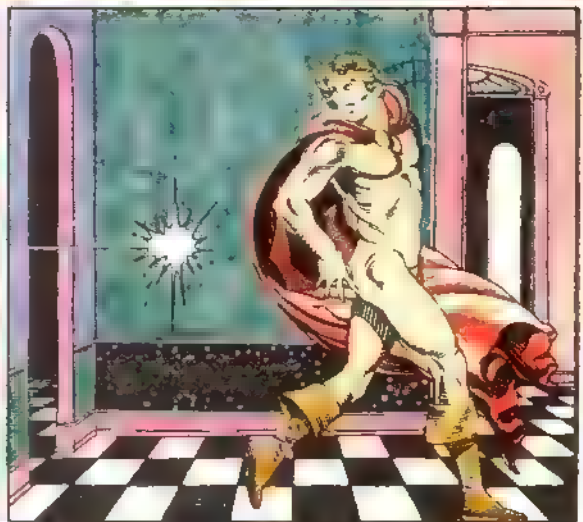
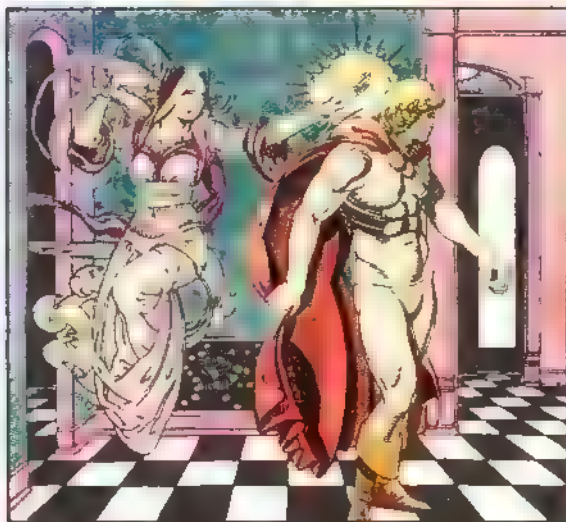
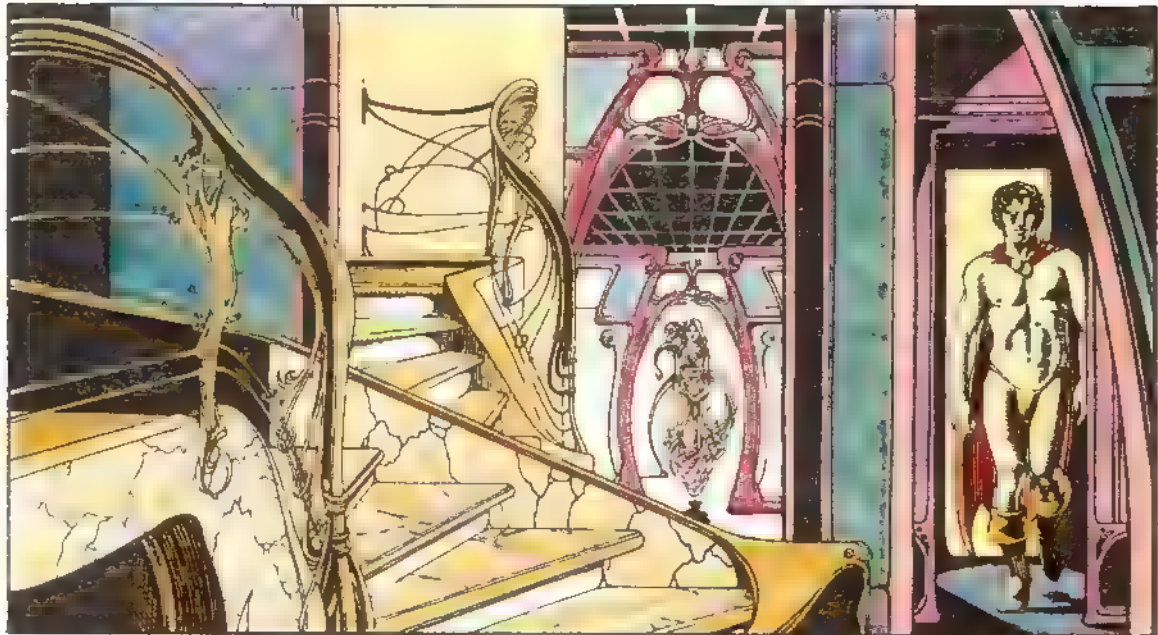


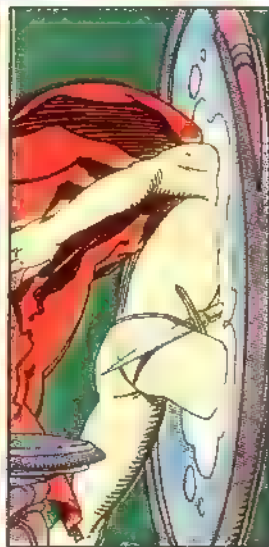
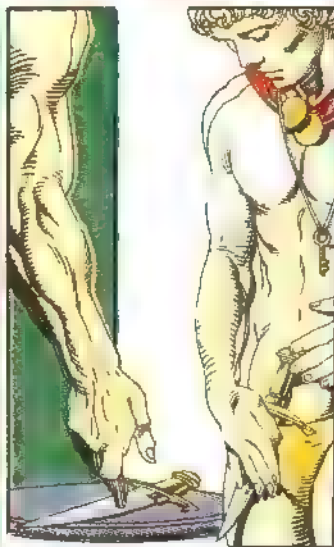
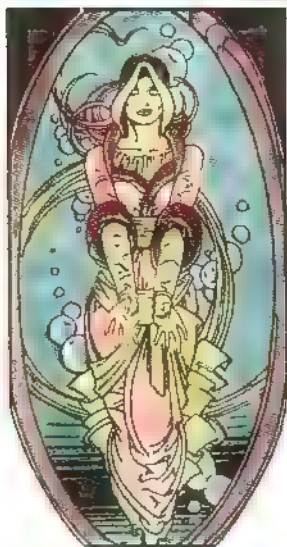
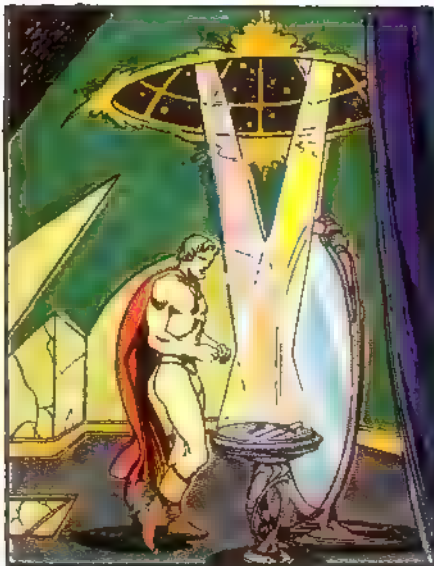


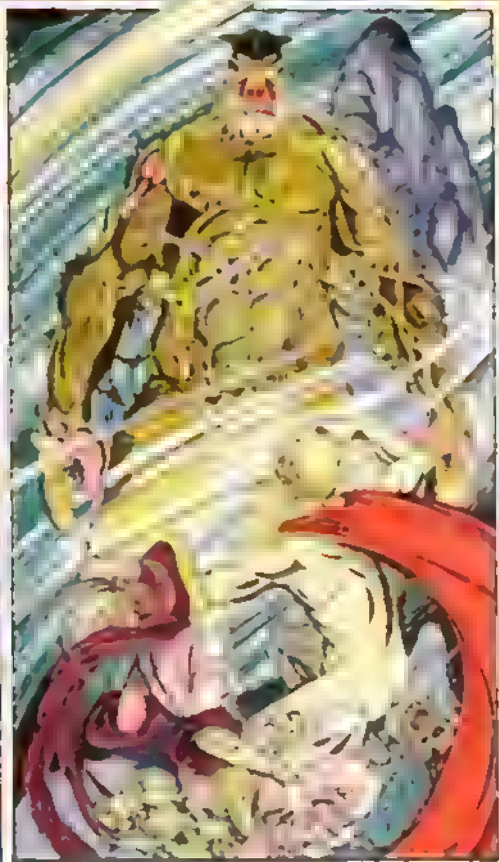
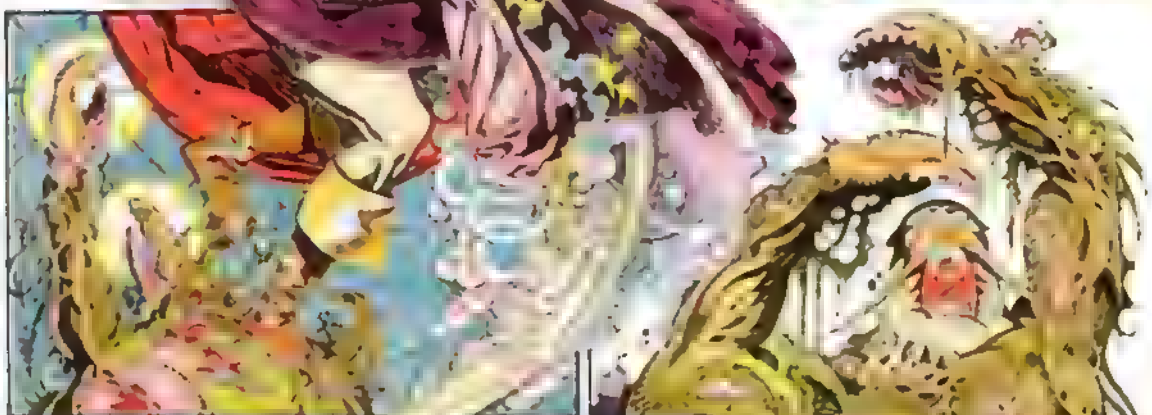
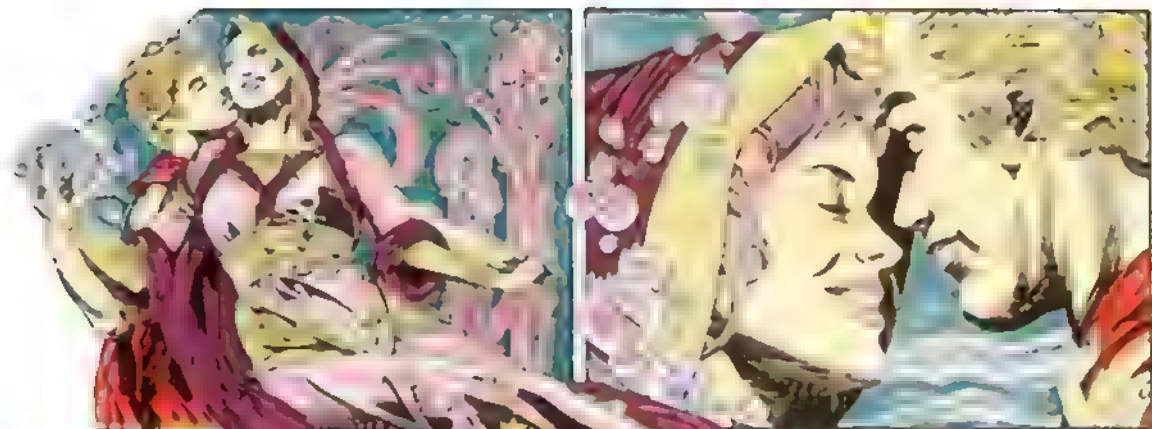




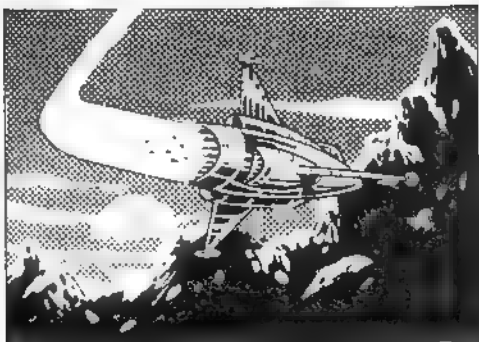








THE CRY OF THE WILDLIFE IS
LOST IN THE ROAR OF THE SHIP'S
SHUDDERING ENGINES



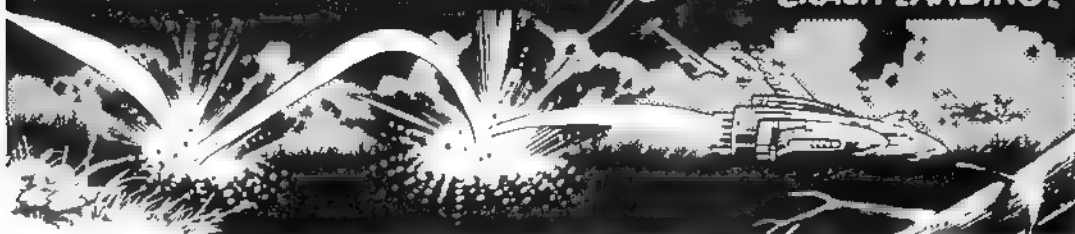
THE PILOT DYING--



--THE VESSEL
IS LEFT TO ITS
OWN ACCORD...

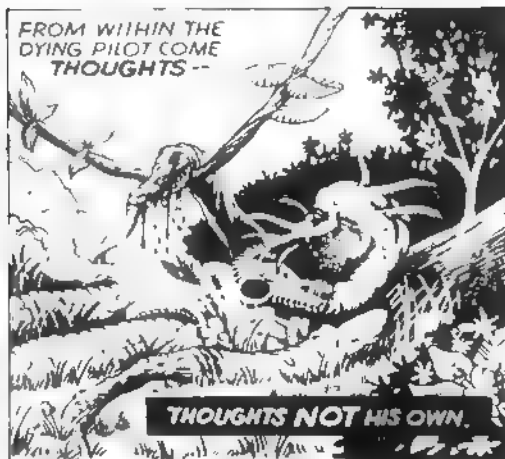


...AND SOFT YIELDING METAL AND FLESH
STRIKE UNYIELDING EARTH AND STONE...



CRASH LANDING!

FROM WITHIN THE
DYING PILOT COME
THOUGHTS--

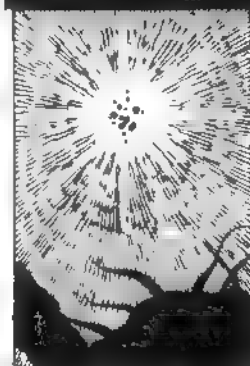


THOUGHTS NOT HIS OWN.

INSTEAD SOMETHING -
ALIEN!!



IT HAS FLED THE
WEAK DYING FRAME
OF ITS HOST
JUST IN TIME...



IT SCANS FOR ANOTHER HOST-SHELL-- AND FINDS ONE ALMOST
IMMEDIATELY-- A BEING RENDERED UNCONSCIOUS BY THE
DEBRIS OF THE CRASH...



HERE IT
SHALL DWELL

GOD

GOD

GOD

GOD

GOD

GOD

DAYS OF FUTURE PAST

IT SCREAMS WITH
JOY. THIS IS A HOST
AMONG HOSTS-- A
GREAT DWELLING
PLACE FOR ONE
OF ITS KIND.

UNLIKE THE WEAK, WISPY SHELL
OF ITS FORMER BODY-- IT
FINDS THIS ONE STRONG...
SO UNBELIEVABLY STRONG.

IN AN ETERNITY SPENT
IN VARIOUS HOST-SHELLS,
IT FINDS THIS ONE
TO BE UNIQUE!

AND IT KNOWS
PROWESS LIKE
IT HAS NEVER
KNOWN
BEFORE!



ITS THOUGHTS
STREAM OUT LIKE
WAVES OF
LIGHT...

IT SENSES THAT INTELLIGENT
BEINGS ARE ALMOST NON-
EXISTENT ON THIS PLANET...
A WORLD AROUND WITH LIFE...

TOUCHING
CREATURES
ALL ABOUT.



WE'VE

WE'VE

WE'VE

WE'VE

WE'VE

... IT HAS NOW BECOME
THE SUPREME POWER!!

HIT

IT SENSES MORE. THESE ARE DYING RACES IT FINDS... SOON THEY WILL TRAVEL THE PATH THAT ALL MORTAL CREATURES MUST TRAVEL... EVEN NOW, WEATHER HAS BEGUN TO STRIKE THEM DOWN...

HIT

HIT

HIT

HIT

HIT

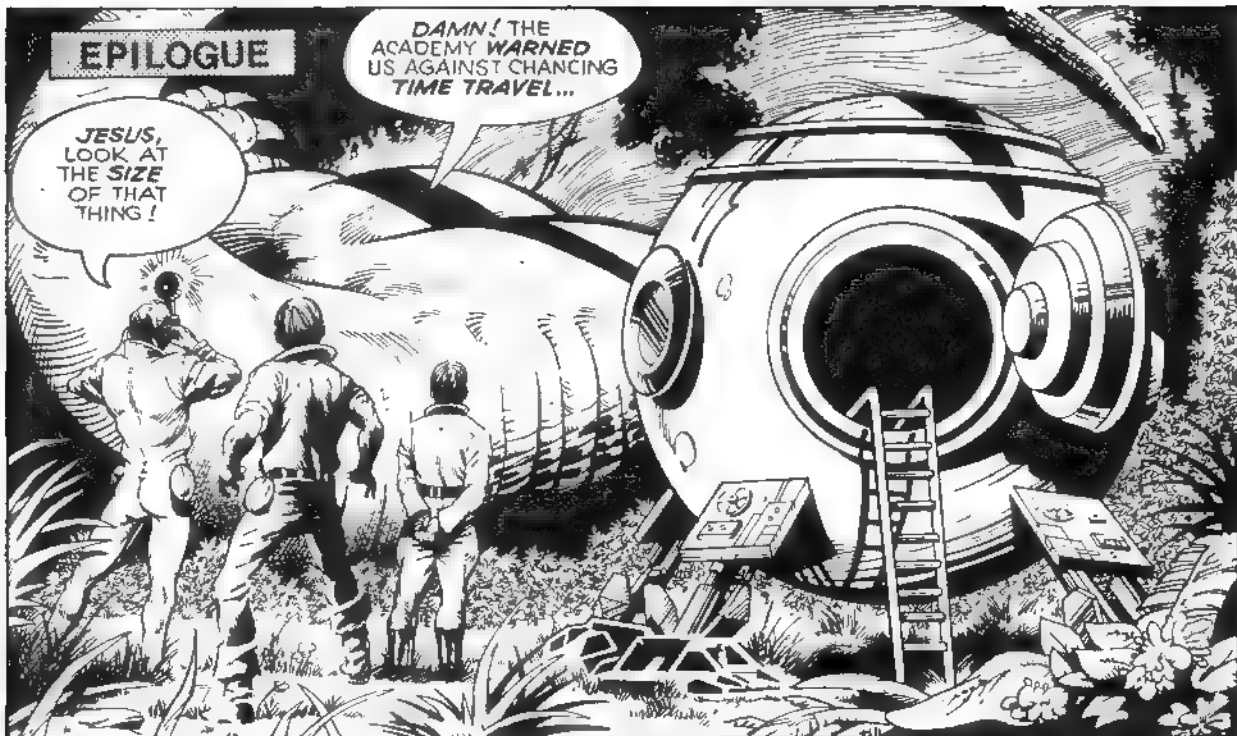


BUT, NO! IT WILL NOT ALLOW SUCH STRONG HOSTS TO PERISH. WITH ITS VAST MENTAL ABILITIES, IT SHALL TEACH THESE BEINGS TO ADAPT--TO LIVE ON.

EPILOGUE

DAMN! THE
ACADEMY WARNED
US AGAINST CHANCING
TIME TRAVEL...

JESUS,
LOOK AT
THE SIZE
OF THAT
THING!



DON'T DAMAGE A SINGLE
BLOSSOM, THEY SAID- KILL
AN INSECT AND OUR
PRESENT ERA-
AND *PAST*--
COULD BE
DISRUPTED.



HOW THE HELL ARE
WE GOING TO
EXPLAIN *THIS*
TO THEM?

IT'S NOT
EXPLAINING
THIS ACCIDENT
THAT BOTHERS
ME SO MUCH

WHAT
WORRIES
ME



...HOW MUCH HAVE WE
CHANGED HISTORY?



PHOBOS... LAWLESS MOON OF MARS WHERE COUNTLESS DENS OF DEPRAVITY NESTLE SNUGLY UNDER A GIANT AIR BUBBLE; WHERE SPACE DERELICTS AND SHADY LADIES MINGLE WITH THE RIFFRAFF OF A GALAXY, FILLING GAMBLING HOUSES, BROTHELS AND BEETLEJUICE DENS.



BEETLEJUICE! A LIQUID COMPOSED OF MILLIONS OF CRUSHED INSECTS NATIVE TO BETELGEUSE IV, AND DRUNK LIKE WHITE WINE BY THE NATIVES, HAS A VERY DIFFERENT EFFECT ON THE TERRAN BODY, PRODUCING AMAZINGLY REAL HALLUCINATIONS AND HELPLESS ADDICTION!



* GEECEES = GALACTIC CREDITS



Drug Fiends

OF THE MARTIAN MOON

by TRINA
with STEVE
LEALONA
in ORZ

"ONCE THERE LIVED ON THE PLANET EARTH A YOUNG WOMAN NAMED GILDA LITVAK. ONE THING MADE HER DIFFERENT FROM OTHER YOUNG TERRAN FEMALES ..

"EVERY DAY SHE REPORTED TO THE RHINE MEMORIAL PSIONIC TESTING LABS. MS. LITVAK WAS A POTENTIAL TELEPATH, AND THE DOCTORS AT THE RHINE LAB WERE DEVELOPING THAT POTENTIAL.

"IN EVERY OTHER WAY, GILDA WAS AN AVERAGE YOUNG WOMAN. AND LIKE 5,000 OTHER AVERAGE MEN AND WOMEN ON EARTH, SHE WAS ADDICTED TO **BEETLEJUICE**. FIRST SHE TRIED IT AT PARTIES. GRADUALLY SHE DEVELOPED A DEPENDENCE ON THE DRUG, AND THE DEPENDENCE BECAME ADDICTION.

"THE SALARY PAID HER AT RHINE LAB COULDN'T BEGIN TO COVER HER NEEDS. SOON SHE WAS STEALING SUPPLIES FROM THE LAB TO PAY FOR HER HABIT. WHEN THE THEFT WAS UNCOVERED SHE WAS LONG GONE."

OF COURSE SHE HAD TO BE ON PHOBOS, THE JUICER'S HAVEN

YOU A COP? THERE'S NO EXTRADITION ON PHOBOS. YOU KNOW THAT

NO, I'M A SPECIAL INVESTIGATOR, A PRIVATE EYE BUT THERE'S MORE TO MY STORY

JP O'ROURKE
CONFIDENTIAL
SPECIAL
INVESTIGATOR

IN THE YEAR SINCE GILDA LEFT THE RHINE LAB DID A LOT OF RESEARCH ON BEETLEJUICE AND CAME UP WITH A STARTLING FACT..

SEEMS WHEN A TELEPATH HALLUCINATES UNDER BEETLEJUICE, HE OR SHE CAN MATERIALIZE THESE HALLUCINATIONS! THEY NEED YOU BACK ON EARTH FOR EXPERIMENTS, GILDA! YOU CAN COME HOME AGAIN!

WAIT A MIN-- THIS IS TOO-- YOU MEAN -

I CAN'T TELL YOU ANYMORE HERE, GILDA. YOU HAVE TO COME WITH ME



SIDDOWN.
MAKE YOURSELF
COMFORTABLE.
IT'S TIME TO
TELL YOU -



- A
LITTLE
MORE -

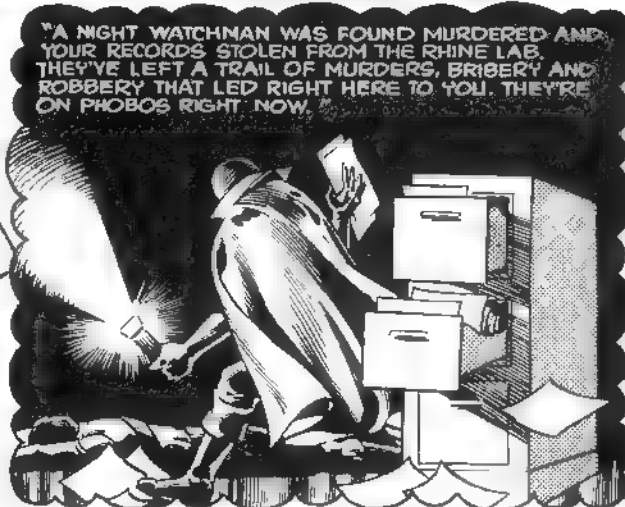


--ABOUT MYSELF!



BUT YOU
LOOK JUST
LIKE .

GILDA LITVAK! QUITE
A COINCIDENCE, eh? THAT'S
WHY I WAS CHOSEN FOR
THE JOB. SEE, SOMEONE
ELSE IS LOOKING FOR
YOU, TOO!



"A NIGHT WATCHMAN WAS FOUND MURDERED AND
YOUR RECORDS STOLEN FROM THE RHINE LAB.
THEY'VE LEFT A TRAIL OF MURDERS, BRIBERY AND
ROBBERY THAT LED RIGHT HERE TO YOU. THEY'RE
ON PHOBOS RIGHT NOW."



SO I'M THE DECOY
YOU STAY RIGHT HERE
IN THIS ROOM DON'T
LEAVE IT FOR ANY
REASON

I'M GOING
OUT THERE
AS GILDA
LITVAK, AND
LET THEM...
WHOEVER
THEY ARE...
FIND ME!



O'ROURKE HEADS BACK TO THE STEAMY BEETLEJUICE DIVE. .

("IF THEY WANT GILDA,
THIS IS WHERE
THEY'LL SHOW UP!")

GILDA!





Meanwhile... BACK IN O'ROURKE'S HOTEL ROOM...



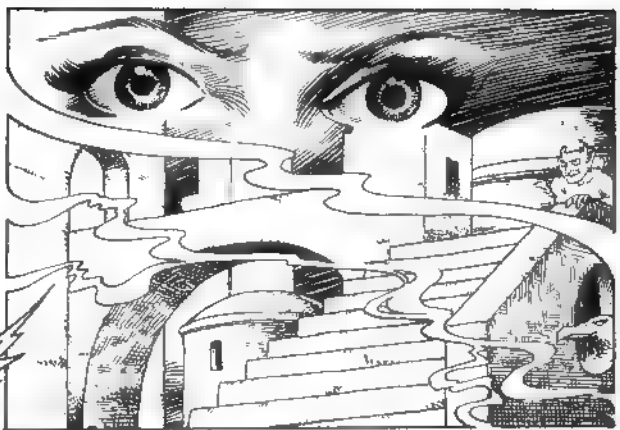


SHE WAS A
POTENTIAL
TELEPATH..



("THAT'S IT! I HAVEN'T
TRIED TO GET INSIDE ANY
ONE'S HEAD SINCE I CAME TO
PHOBOS, BUT I CAN DO IT...
I'VE GOT TO DO IT")

O'ROURKE...O'ROURKE.. IT'S GILDA



("GILDA,
BLESS YOU!
THEY'VE GOT ME
TIED UP..")



("KEEP
THINKING
AT ME")



("I'M
REACHING
YOU..")



("GOTCHA! AND THEY'RE SO
SURE OF THEMSELVES THEY'VE
LEFT A WINDOW OPEN!")



("GILDA!
HIDE! THEY'RE
COMING!")



EARTHWORM, YOU'RE
GOING ON A TRIP
TO BETELGEUSE.

THERE
WE WILL
UNLOCK
YOUR
MIND.



WE WILL
TAKE YOU
APART BIT
BY BIT,
EARTHWORM.
WE WILL PICK
YOUR BRAIN
TILL WE KNOW
HOW YOU
SOLIDIFY YOUR
BEETLEJUICE
DREAMS!



("O'Rourke! THE HALLUCINATIONS! I CAN'T CONTROL THEM!")



DON'T TRY, GILDA! LET THEM GO!

WHAT IN GRAAL...?



EEYAAE!

YOU'RE NOT REAL!

NO! NO

QUICKLY!

GET BACK!



THE MONSTERS'LL DISAPPEAR WHEN THE DRUG WEARS OFF, BUT THEIR EFFECTS ARE VERY REAL.

ONE YEAR LATER AT THE RHINE MEMORIAL TESTING LABS



SO I'VE LEARNED HOW TO MATERIALIZE HALLUCINATIONS WITHOUT THE DRUG. AND I DON'T NEED BEETLE JUICE ANYMORE!



THAT'S GREAT, KID LISTEN..

MY NEXT ASSIGNMENT ON ALDABARAN CONCERNS SOME MISSING ARTIFACTS, AND I COULD USE A TALENT LIKE YOURS.

WANNA BE MY PARTNER?



WOW, O'Rourke AND LITVAK!

SAY, WHAT DOES THE J.P. STAND FOR, ANYWAY?

THAT'S ANOTHER STORY.

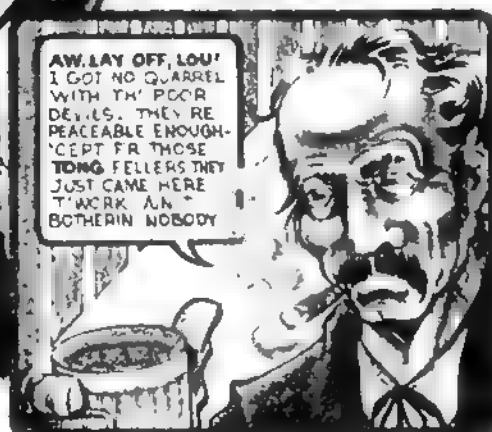
End

ENCOUNTER



CRAZY CAT SALOON

©1978 MICHAEL T. GILBERT 27



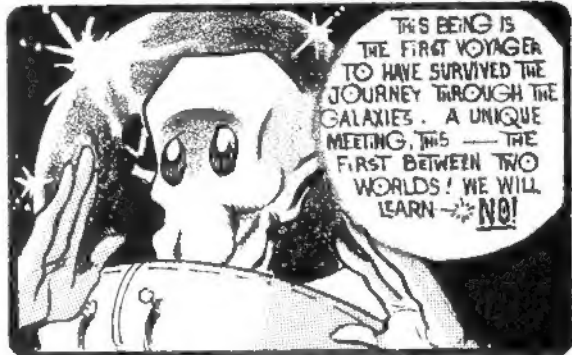
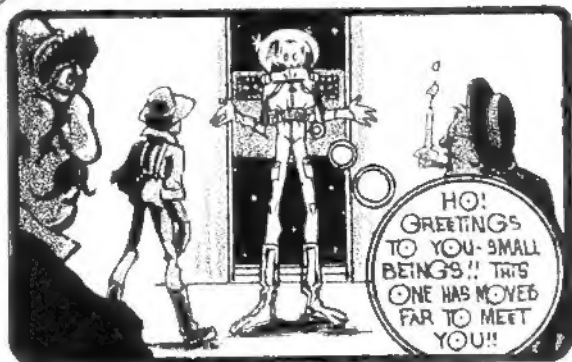
AWAY Y'R BREAKIN' UP
M' HEART ALL T' PIECES!
HOW C'M Y'AIN'T A PREACHER
MAN 'ZEKE? LIZZEN - THEY
CALLED 'TH' NATIONAL GUARD
IN T' QUIET DOWN Y'R
"PERCEABLE CH NEE" LAST
YEAR IN SAN FRANCISCO IT NUZ
B G. STORY IN TH' POLICE GAZETTE!

Y' GOTTA WATCH WHUT YEAY
'ZEKE. LOU AN ME WE
KNOW Y'R OK BUT A
LOTTA FOLKS D GET TH'
WRONG IDEA - UNDERSTAND?
COULD BE SOME TROUBLE IF

WHOA! SLOW UP
BOYS! I WUZ JUST
JUST HEY!!
WHATCHOO STARIN'
AT, LOU? LOU? LOU?

TOMBSTONE
EPITAPH





END

Would YOU buy
a USED COMIC
from this man?

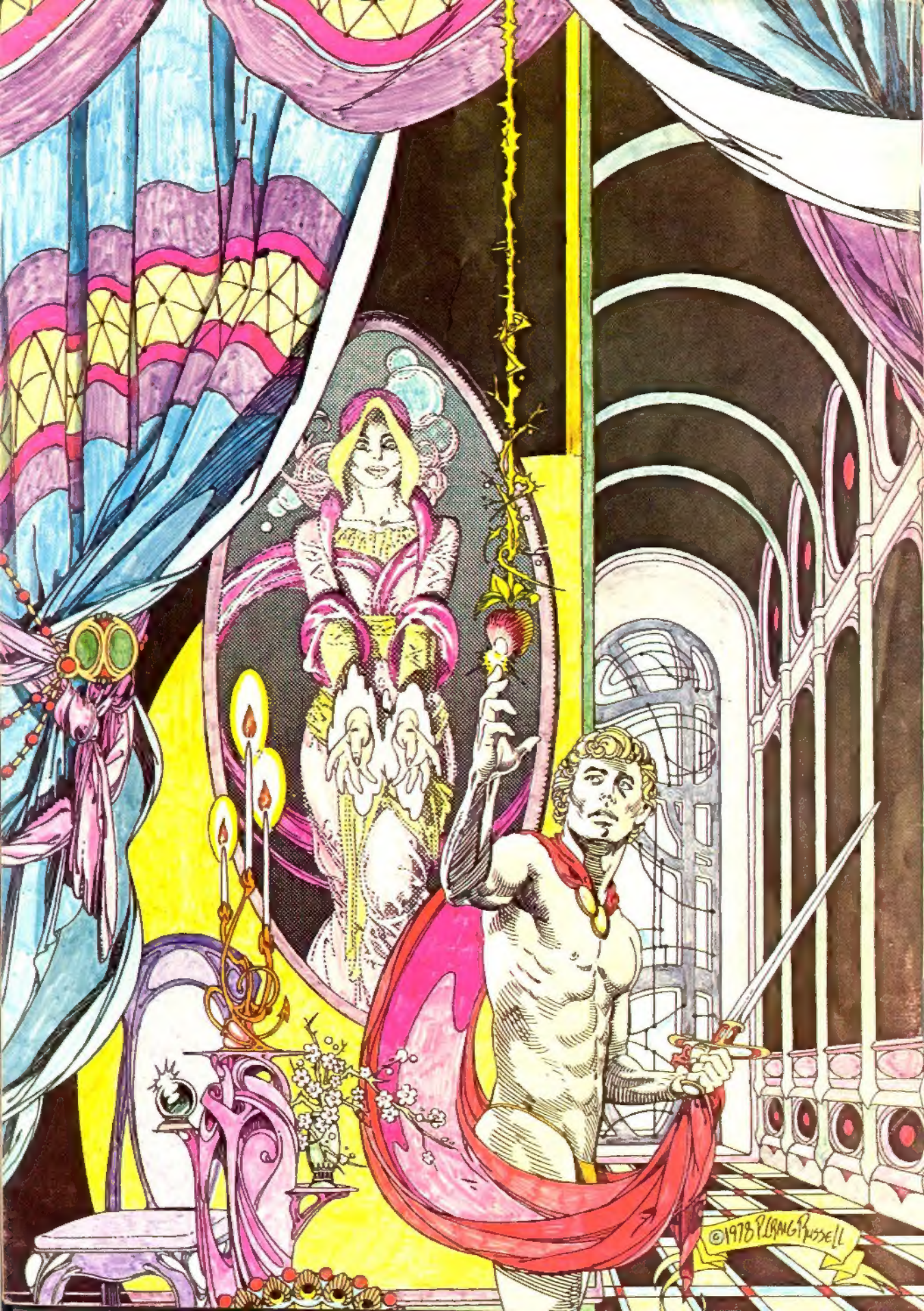


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1st Edition

Star*Reach Productions

\$1.50

44 pages

Print run of 14,100 copies

7" x 10"

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Comments:

Says "First Printing June 1978" on page 2.

Color added to pages 19-26